



System Worth Saving Site Visit Report

- **Date:** December 17, 2020
- **Location:** Virtual Meeting
- **Attendees:**
 - Rehab Committee Members*- Chairman Wilson Spence, Gary Munkholm, Daniel Tengwall, and Jim Finley
 - *Department Service Officer*- Jeremy Wolfsteller.
 - Minneapolis VA Health Care System Community Resource & Referral Center*– Program Director Jonelle Glubke.

- **Purpose**

The American Legion Dept. Rehabilitation Committee is tasked with staying engaged with agencies that aid Minnesota veterans. The committee does this by conducting System Worth Saving Site Visits throughout the year. These locations include Sioux Falls, Fargo, St. Cloud and Minneapolis VA Health Care Systems, St. Paul Regional Offices, Minneapolis, Hastings, Luverne, Fergus Falls and Silver Bay Veterans Homes. Additional Site Visits are conducted at VA CBOC's, Vets Centers, and Minnesota nonprofits that serve veterans when the budget allows.

CRRC Overview

The Minneapolis VA Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC) is one of 31 VA centers nationally, aimed at ending homelessness among Veterans. The mission is to support Veterans who are experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness, or serious mental illness by promoting physical and mental health, assisting in securing and maintaining housing, and by working with Veterans to achieve increased community integration.





CRRC Overview Continued:

The Minneapolis VA CRRC is there to supply needed resources and help Veterans overcome barriers to achieve Veteran identified goals:

- Counseling
- Medical care
- Prevention
- Employment services
- Housing referrals
- Benefits
- Substance abuse treatment
- Personalized psychosocial rehabilitation
- Community partners and services on site

The center also includes a Primary Care Clinic, multipurpose room with kitchen for classes, laundry, showers, group rooms, community rooms, and a computer lab.

Daily Services (days and times are subject to change):

- Showers: Monday-Friday: 8-11:30 a.m.
- Laundry Services: Monday-Friday: 8-11 a.m.
- Computer Lab: Mon, Wed, Thu: 8am-noon, Tue: 8-11 a.m., Fri: noon-4 p.m.

Primary Care: If you are interested in primary care services, please let your case manager or reception know.

Homeless Programs: Outreach, transitional programs and supportive housing for veterans experiencing homelessness. Case management, skills and educational groups, substance use and mental health services available.

Veterans Bridge to Recovery: Pursuing goals and community integration for Veterans with serious mental illness. Learn more about VBR on the Veterans Bridge to Recovery website.





Meeting Minutes:

- **Staffing:** The Center has approximately 54 staff that consist of social workers, psychiatrist, physicians and nurses.
- **HUDVASH Program:** There are 885 program vouchers allocated as of FY21 to the Center. This is based on VA's Point in Time Count (PIT).
 - **Project Based Vouchers:** These include case management and are for specific housing units such as Common Bonds or Catholic Charities Dorothy Day Center. The units allow for a certain number of vouchers. Not all project base is in the metro, Mankato, Duluth, Rochester and Chippewa Falls Wisconsin.
 - **Individual Choice Vouchers:** These are mostly used by rural veterans not looking to relocate into the cities where more project-based units are. Also, veterans that are not in need of case management.
 - **Voucher availability:** Any given month there is an estimated 10-20 vouchers that become available. This is due to veterans no longer needing a voucher or not following rules associated with the voucher program.
- **MDVA Homeless Registry:** The Registry connects Veterans experiencing homelessness with housing and services in their community. It also helps programs and partners serving Veterans to coordinate their efforts. Anyone who served in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard can join the Registry, regardless of the type of discharge or length of time in the service. If you are a Veteran and choose to join, a team of housing and service professionals will work together to help you access housing and services that meet your needs. Participation is voluntary for Veterans. Choosing not to participate will not affect eligibility for services.
 - Currently 283 veterans are on the registry.
 - 86 of the veterans on the registry are not VA eligible, which means they cannot use HUDVASH vouchers.
 - Approximately 25% of MN veterans are experiencing reoccurring homelessness.





Meeting Minutes Continued:

- **SSVF Funding:** Supportive Service for Veterans Families is VA funding provided to non-profits that provide supportive services for at risk or homeless veterans.
 - Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans is the largest Organization in MN that provides services for homeless veterans or at-risk veterans.
 - FY21 MAC-V received \$5,770,481 in SSVF funding.
 - Continuum of Care for Minneapolis/Hennepin County, St. Paul/Ramsey County Rochester/Southeast Minnesota, Dakota, Anoka, Washington, Scott, Carver Counties, Northeast Minnesota, St. Cloud/Central Minnesota, Northwest Minnesota, Moorhead/West Central Minnesota, Duluth/St. Louis County, Southwest Minnesota.

- **Grant and Per Diem Program:**
 - VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is offered annually (as funding permits) by the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Programs to fund community agencies providing services to homeless Veterans. The purpose is to promote the development and provision of supportive housing and/or supportive services with the goal of helping homeless Veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels and/or income, and obtain greater self-determination.
 - Only programs with supportive housing (up to 24 months) or service centers (offering services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, services targeted towards specialized populations including homeless women Veterans, etc.) are eligible for these funds. The program has two levels of funding: the Grant Component and the Per Diem Component.
 - **Grants:** Limit is 65% of the costs of construction, renovation, or acquisition of a building for use as service centers or transitional housing for homeless Veterans. Renovation of VA properties is allowed, acquiring VA properties is not. Recipients must obtain the matching 35% share from other sources. Grants may not be used for operational costs, including salaries.
 - **Per Diem:** Priority in awarding the Per Diem funds goes to the recipients of Grants. Non-Grant programs may apply for Per Diem under a separate announcement, when published in the Federal Register, announcing the funding for "Per Diem Only." The current award list for "Per-diem only is (MAC-V-13 beds), (Catholic Charities St. Paul 6 beds), (Salvation Army Harbor Lights 30 beds).





Meeting Minutes Continued:

- o Operational costs, including salaries, may be funded by the Per Diem Component. For supportive housing, the maximum amount payable under the per diem is \$49.91 per day per Veteran housed (CARES Act waiver). Veterans in supportive housing may be asked to pay rent if it does not exceed 30% of the Veteran's monthly-adjusted income. In addition, "reasonable" fees may be charged for services not paid with Per Diem funds. The maximum hourly per diem rate for a service center not connected with supportive housing is 1/8 of the daily cost of care, not to exceed the current VA State Home rate for domiciliary care. Payment for a Veteran in a service center will not exceed 8 hours in any day.
- o Applications are not accepted for Capital Grants or "Per Diem Only" funding until the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is published in the Federal Register. Funds will be awarded to programs determined to be the most qualified.
- **VA National Call Center for Homeless Veterans:**
 - o (877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838)
 - o Website: Veterans Experiencing Homelessness (va.gov)
- **SQUARES:**
 - o a VA web application that provides external homeless service organizations with reliable, detailed information about Veteran eligibility. Users submit identity attributes for homeless individuals (name, DOB, SSN, gender), and SQUARES returns information regarding their Veteran status and eligibility for homeless programs. The tool facilitates quick and simple access to care for homeless and at-risk Veterans.
- The American Legion Dept. of MN recently helped approve a \$10,000 Gift Card Grant donated to the CRRRC to assist Homeless Veterans. This was approved by Veterans 4 Veterans Trust Fund.

Department Rehabilitation Chairman: Wilson Spence III

Department Service Officer & Committee Secretary: Jeremy Wolfsteller

